

IN THE CLAIMS

1 1. (Cancelled)

1 2. (Cancelled)

1 3. (Cancelled)

1 4. (Cancelled)

1 5. (Cancelled)

1 6. (Currently Amended) An isolated nucleotide sequence encoding for a protein
2 characterized in having a silencing activity and in comprising a RNA-dependent RNA
3 polymerase domain [~~according to claim 4~~], wherein said nucleotide sequence is the sequence
4 [~~of SEQ ID No. 2~~] from nt. 2447 to nt. 6652 of SEQ ID No. 1 or its complementary sequence.

1 7. (Currently Amended) [~~Expression~~] An expression vector comprising, under the
2 control of a promoter that directs the expression in bacteria, the nucleotide sequence according
3 to claim [~~4~~] 6.

1 8. (Currently Amended) [~~Expression~~] An expression vector comprising, under the
2 control of a promoter that directs the expression in plant organs, the nucleotide sequence
3 according to claim [~~4~~] 6 in a sense [~~or~~] and anti-sense orientation.

1 9. (Currently Amended) [~~Expression~~] An expression vector comprising, under the
2 control of a promoter that directs the expression in fungi, the nucleotide sequence according to
3 claim[1] 6 in a sense [~~or~~] and anti-sense orientation.

1 10. (Currently Amended) An Expression vector comprising, under the control of a
2 promoter that directs the expression in animals, the nucleotide sequence according to claim[1]
3 6 in a sense [~~or~~] and anti-sense orientation.

1 11. (Currently Amended) A Bacterial organism transformed the expression vector
2 active in bacteria according to claim 7.

1 12. (Cancelled)

1 13. (Cancelled)

1 14. (Currently Amended) A Fungus transformed by the expression vector active in
2 fungi according to claim 9.

1 15. (Cancelled).

1 16. (Cancelled)

1 17. (Cancelled)

1 18. (Cancelled)

1 19. (Cancelled)

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1 20. (Cancelled)

1 21. (Cancelled)

1 22. (Cancelled)

1 23. (Cancelled)